

REMARKS

In response to the above-identified Final Office Action (“Action”), Applicants submit the following remarks and seek reconsideration thereof. Claims 1-18 and 20-22 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 3-18 and 20-22 are rejected and claim 2 is objected to. In this response, claims 1 and 3-18 are amended, claims 2 and 20-22 are cancelled and no claims are added.

I. Claim Amendments

Applicants respectfully submit herewith amendments to claims 1 and 3-18. Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the limitations of now cancelled claim 2. Claims 1 and 3-18 are further amended to recite “characterized” rather than “characterised.” Finally, claims 3, 6-8, 10-12, 15 and 18 are amended to correct their dependencies.

Applicants respectfully submit the amendments do not add new matter and are supported by the specification. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request consideration and entry of the amendments to claims 1 and 3-18.

II. Drawings

Applicants respectfully submit herewith amendments to Figures 6 and 8 to correct typographical errors and conform the figures to the description provided in the Application. In particular, Figures 6 and 8 are amended to replace the reference number “(1122)” in boxes (b), (b¹), (c), (d), (e) and (f) with “(11-22).” The amendments are submitted in the form of a “Replacement Sheet” in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request consideration and entry of the amendments to Figures 6 and 8.

III. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102

In the Action, claims 1, 3-9, 12-13, 15 and 21-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0028564 to Motoki et al. (“Motoki”).

It is axiomatic to a finding of anticipation that each and every element of the rejected claim be found within a single prior art reference.

Claims 21 and 22 are cancelled therefore the rejection of claims 21 and 22 on this basis is moot.

Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 2, which the Examiner indicates would be in condition for allowance if rewritten in independent form. Thus, for at least the reasons recognized by the Examiner, amended claim 1 and its dependent claims 3-9, 12-13 and 15 are not anticipated by Motoki. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 3-9, 12-13 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102 over Motoki.

IV. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

A. In the Action, claims 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Motoki in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0117677 to Okuyama et al. (“Okuyama”).

Claims 10 and 11 depend from claim 1, which as previously discussed, is now in condition for allowance. Thus, for at least the reasons that claims 10 and 11 depend from an allowable base claim, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Motoki and Okuyama.

B. In the Action, claims 14 and 16-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Motoki in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,802,902 to Beaumont et al. (“Beaumont”).

Claims 14 and 16-17 depend from claim 1, which as previously discussed, is now in condition for allowance. Thus, for at least the reasons that claims 14 and 16-17 depend from an allowable base claim, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 14 and 16-17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Motoki and Beaumont.

C. In the Action, claims 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Motoki.

Claims 19 and 20 are cancelled therefore the rejection of claims 19 and 20 on this basis is moot. Claim 18 depends from claim 1, which as previously discussed, is now in condition for allowance. Thus, for at least the reasons that claim 18 depends from an allowable base claim, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Motoki

V. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants respectfully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claim 2 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As previously discussed, claim 1 is amended to include each of the limitations of claim 2. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to claim 2 and allowance of claim 1 and its dependent claims at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

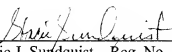
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending, namely claims 1 and 3-18, are now in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If there are any additional fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666. Questions regarding this matter should be directed to the undersigned at (310) 207-3800.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being submitted electronically via EFS Web to the United States Patent and Trademark Office on May 16, 2008.


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